Journal 2 Instructions

**Due Date: Monday, 3/19/12**

Read Louis Menand, “The Graduates” p. 177 and Vartan Gregorian, “America, Still on Top” p. 180. Respond to **two questions for each reading** (four responses total). Be sure to label each question with the author’s last name and question number (i.e., Menand #2).

Be sure to answer all parts of the question in your response (but don’t list the different questions out and then answer them; just answer them in prose format).

The Graduates:

1. Menand states that American colleges operate on a meritocratic system; then, he goes on to state that, “Children from higher-income families enjoy an advantage in competing for the top spots.” Write in response to these two ideas. Do they work together or are they in opposition to one another? How can you explain these two ideas? Describe your feelings about this and your reaction.
2. In paragraph 8, Menand poses the question, “What do we want from college, though?” Write an answer to this. As a society, what do we expect people to gain from a college degree? What is the purpose of sending our youth to higher education after finishing high school?
3. Menand includes several statistics about American higher education. Write down two of the statistics and, for each, include an interpretation and a prediction for each. In other words, what does the statistic tell us about American higher education and what do you predict will result from this information?

America, Still on Top:

1. Discuss the meaning of the title of this article. What is Gregorian’s central message in this article? Provide textual evidence (supply quotes from the text) that demonstrate the author’s main idea. How does the author conclude the article, and how does that fit with the title?
2. Compare the establishment of higher education in the U.S. with the establishment of higher education in other parts of the world. Why does Gregorian provide this contrast? What is he attempting to demonstrate?
3. In the last two sentences of paragraph 6, Gregorian provides statistics about the production of math, science and engineering students in the U.S. higher education system. Interpret this information. What does it mean for us and how should we as a nation respond to these figures?